

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John Hume, leader, Social Democratic and Labor Party, and David Trimble, First Minister, Northern Ireland Assembly, Nobel Peace Prize Laureates; Sinn Fein leader and Northern Ireland Assembly member Gerry Adams; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; Prime Minister Tony Blair and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Marjorie Mowlam of the United Kingdom; Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of the Northern Ireland Assembly; and former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty peace talks in Northern Ireland.

Statement Announcing the Award of the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany

October 16, 1998

I am very pleased to announce my intention to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Helmut Kohl, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Medal of Freedom is this Nation's highest civilian honor, and it is a fitting tribute to the extraordinary accomplishments of Chancellor Kohl.

Throughout his 16-year tenure as leader of Germany, Chancellor Kohl has made historic contributions to the cause of peace and freedom in Europe and around the world. With uncommon vision and unstinting courage, he led the reunification of Germany while pushing deeper European integration, bolstered transatlantic solidarity, and promoted the cause of democracy everywhere. Americans are grateful for the untiring efforts of this inspiring leader, who will rank among those who changed the course of history.

Helmut Kohl has been a lifelong friend of the United States and has personally committed himself to the enduring partnership of our two countries. On behalf of all Americans, it is my profound pleasure to honor him with this symbol of our Nation's high esteem and deep appreciation.

Proclamation 7142—National Forest Products Week, 1998

October 16, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Our Nation has been blessed with abundant natural resources, and among the most precious of these are our forests. Because forests cover about one-third of the land area of the United States, their splendor is not limited to one region, but is shared by our entire country. All Americans can experience the variety and beauty of our forests, parks, and woodlands and share the joys of hiking, camping, bird watching, and other recreational activities. Likewise, all Americans benefit from the essentials for life that forests provide: clean water, clean air, soil stability, pollution reduction, and a rich habitat for plants and animals. Forests also supply us with products vital to our society and economy, from building materials to paper products to medicines.

Maintaining the health of our Nation's forests is an important and delicate task. As we continue to grow, both in terms of population and in land developed, we put increased pressure on our forests and woodland areas. In the past, such growth occurred without regard to its impact and often threatened the very existence of our forests and the diverse wildlife they support. Learning from our mistakes, today we use wise forest management strategies and careful stewardship to ensure that our forests will remain both healthy and productive.

Such management requires strong cooperation among private citizens, government agencies, and the forestry industry. Half of our Nation's forestlands belong to private landowners, the Federal Government and State governments own 40 percent, and the forest products industry owns the remaining 10 percent. All three groups have been working together to ensure the sustainable development of our forests and woodlands. State Foresters and Cooperative State Extension Agents, with assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, play a vital

role in this endeavor, helping private land-owners properly manage their forestlands through technical assistance, educational programs, and voluntary incentives. Working in partnership, government, industry, and private citizens are making progress in the vital task of preserving the health of America's forests and woodlands while providing essential products to the American people.

To recognize the importance of our forests in ensuring the long-term welfare of our Nation, the Congress, by Public Law 86-753 (36 U.S.C. 163), has designated the week beginning on the third Sunday in October of each year as "National Forest Products Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 18 through October 24, 1998, as National Forest Products Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 12:05 p.m., October 19, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* in October 20.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 12

In the afternoon, the President traveled to New York City, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

October 13

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Silver Spring, MD, and later, he returned to Washington, DC.

October 14

The President announced his intention to nominate John C. Truesdale to be a member of the National Labor Relations Board.

The President declared a major disaster in Missouri and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on October 4-11.

The President declared a major disaster in Kansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and tornadoes on October 1-8.

October 15

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Wye Mills, MD. In the evening, he held separate meetings with Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel in the Commons Room at the Wye River Conference Center.

Later, the President hosted a dinner for the leaders and their delegation in the Carmichael House at the conference center. In the late evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

October 16

In the morning, the President traveled to Chicago, IL, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Washington State and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a landslide in Kelso on March 6 and continuing.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.
